

MASTER OF
KUNG FU™

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TM

THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU™

BEGINNING! THE MOST
SHOCKING SHANG-CHI
SAGA EVER!

The **PHOENIX
GAMBIT!**



**BEHOLD! THE
ANGEL^{OF} DOOM!**

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*.

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

THE PHOENIX GAMBIT

PART I: "THE TEMPLES OF TIME"



"A FEVER OF
STRANGE FIRES
AND FROST FILLS
MY MIND, FLICKERING
WITH UNKNOWN SENSATIONS,
FLASHING LOST
PIECES OF THE PAST.

"IT SEEMS TO BE A DRAMA,
AND THERE ARE MANY
SCENES, BUT ALWAYS--
ALWAYS-- THE DOMINANT
IMAGE IS...DEATH.

DOUG MOENCH-- WRITER
MIKE ZECK--ARTIST
JOHN TARTAG --INKER
IRV WATANABE--LETTERER
JAN COHEN--COLORIST
ARCHIE GOODWIN--EDITOR

"AFRICA IS COVERED IN ICE.

WHERE?

"I DO NOT KNOW... BUT THE MYSTERY, LIKE THE BITTER COLD, APPARENTLY DOES NOT BOTHER ME...

WHY?

HOW?

"...NOT EVEN WHEN I SEE THE LAST ANIMALS, FROZEN TO A VELD OF SNOW, MIERD IN THE CLUTCHES OF VAST ICE... DYING.

"GREAT TREES WITH DEEP ROOTS ARE SHEATHED IN GLITTERING CLOAKS OF CRYSTAL. IT IS ALL QUITE BEAUTIFUL, STEALING MY BREATH... BUT IT IS ALL QUITE WRONG. THE ANIMALS VOICE WEAK SOUNDS.

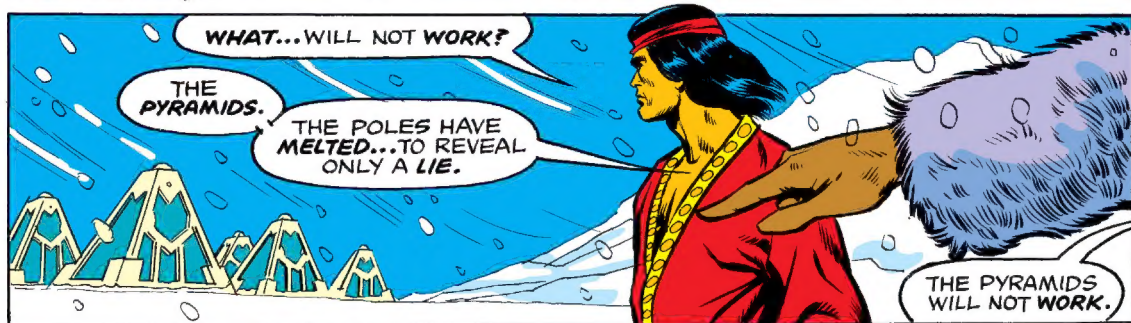
"AFRICA SHOULD BE HOT. WHY DOES THIS NOT ALARM ME? SHOULD I NOT FEEL MORE THAN MERE CURIOSITY, OR THE WISTFUL MELANCHOLY OF A DREAM WHICH HAS TWISTED TRUTH INTO FRIGHTENING BUT FASCINATING FANTASY...?

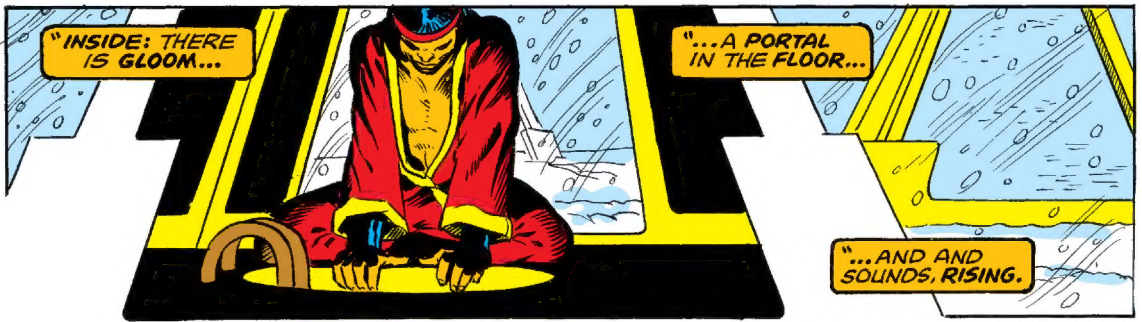
WHO...?

"A FIGURE WATCHES, AS THE ANIMALS DIE FOR LOST HEAT.

"THE FIGURE IS MYSTERIOUS, PLAINTIVE, A STUDY IN LONELY SADNESS SWATHED IN THE FURS OF OTHER ANIMALS, GONE TO EARLIER DEATHS, IN BLOOD UNDER A HOT SUN. THE FURS ARE WHIPPED, NOW, BY SCREAMING WINDS, BUT THE FIGURE DOES NOT MOVE.

"I WILL SPEAK QUESTIONS TO HIM..."

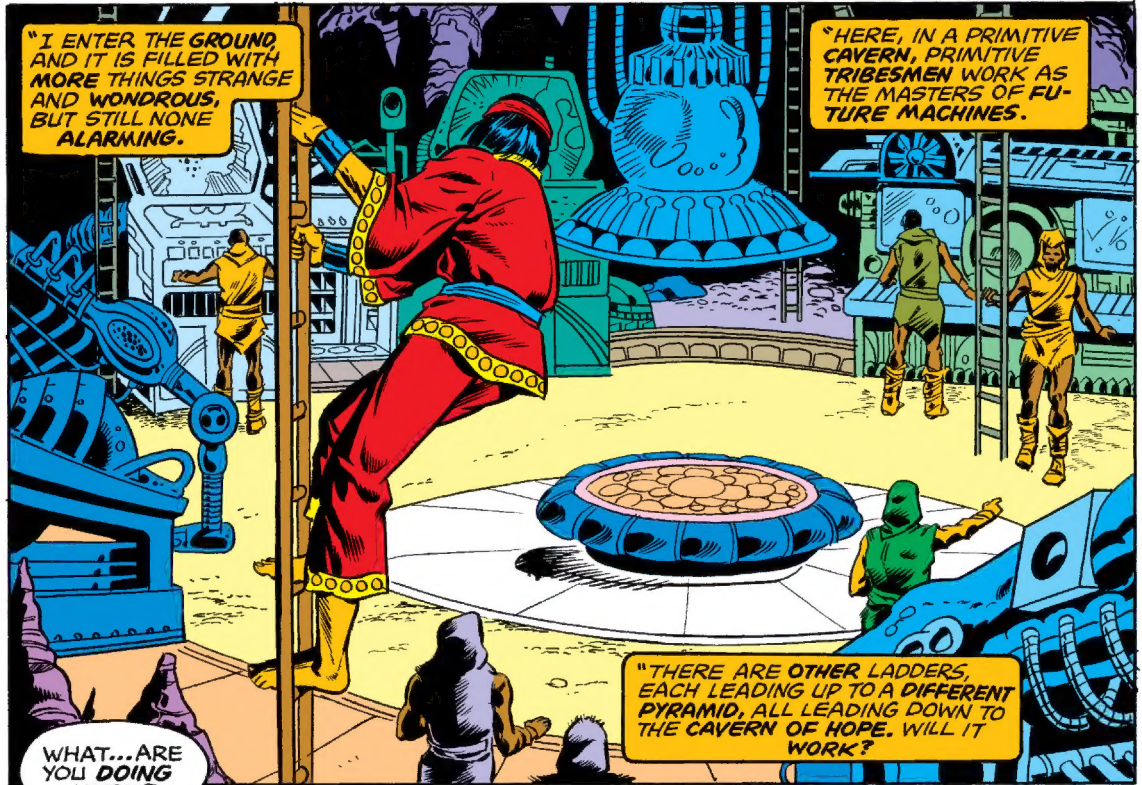




"INSIDE: THERE IS GLOOM..."

"...A PORTAL IN THE FLOOR..."

"...AND AND SOUNDS, RISING."



"I ENTER THE GROUND, AND IT IS FILLED WITH MORE THINGS STRANGE AND WONDROUS, BUT STILL NONE ALARMING."

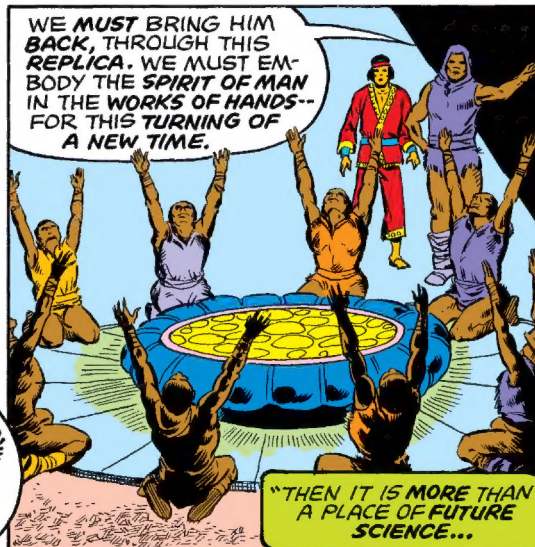
"HERE, IN A PRIMITIVE CAVERN, PRIMITIVE TRIBESMEN WORK AS THE MASTERS OF FUTURE MACHINES."

"THERE ARE OTHER LADDERS, EACH LEADING UP TO A DIFFERENT PYRAMID, ALL LEADING DOWN TO THE CAVERN OF HOPE. WILL IT WORK?"

WHAT...ARE YOU DOING HERE?

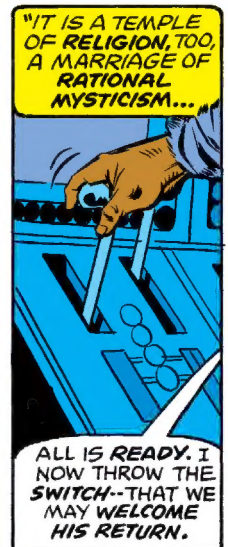


RECONSTRUCTING THE GATEWAY--RECREATING THE ADVENT. THE AXIS HAS SHIFTED, BUT HE SHOWED US THE SENSE IN IT. HE GAVE US BLISS AND HOPE. BUT HE IS GONE NOW, AND IT IS AGAIN SENSELESS DEATH AND DESPAIR.



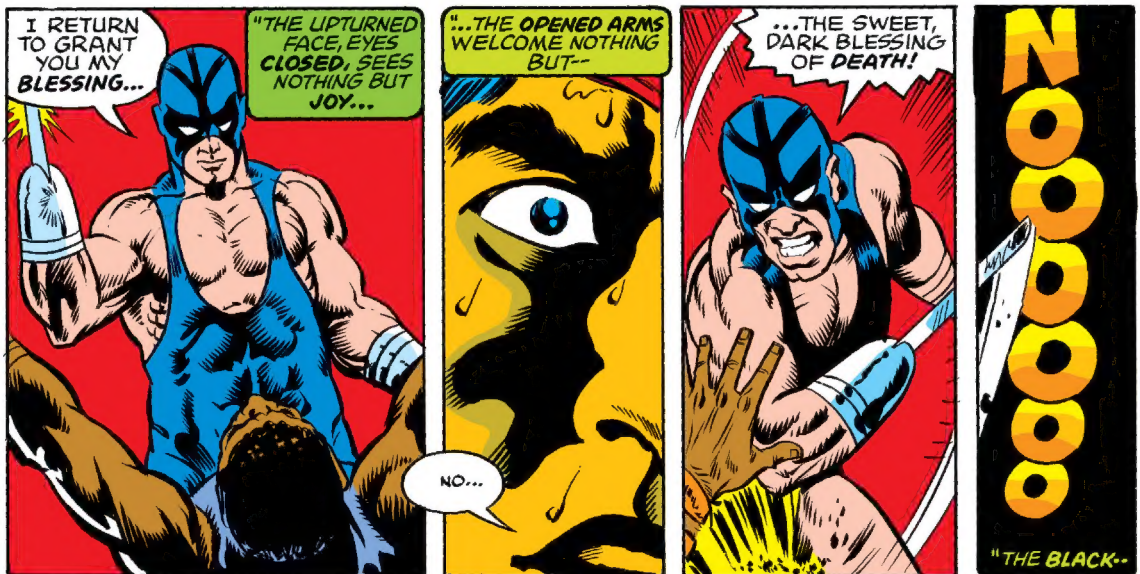
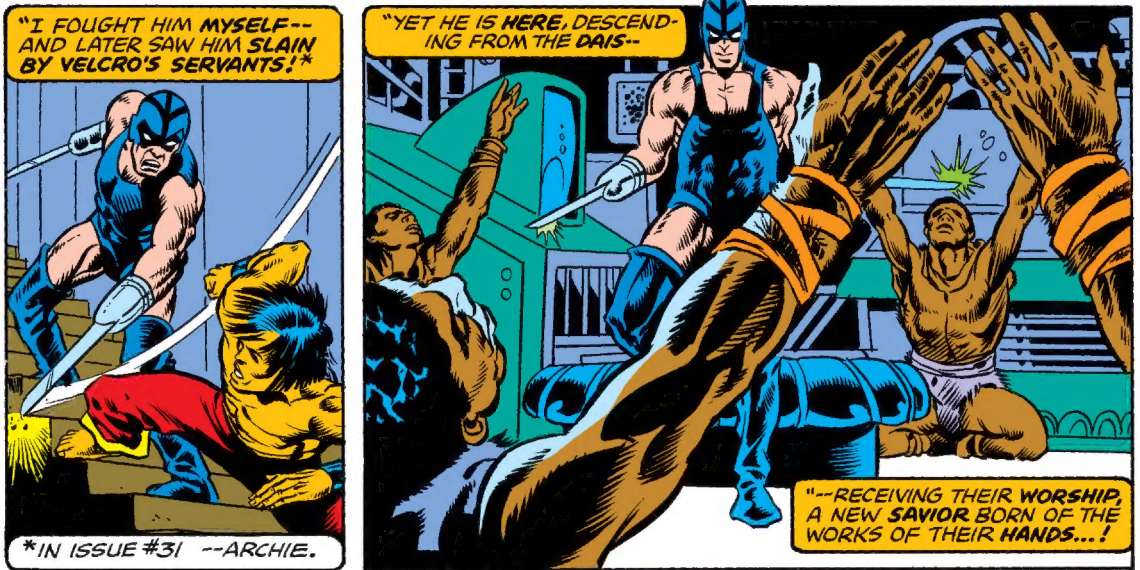
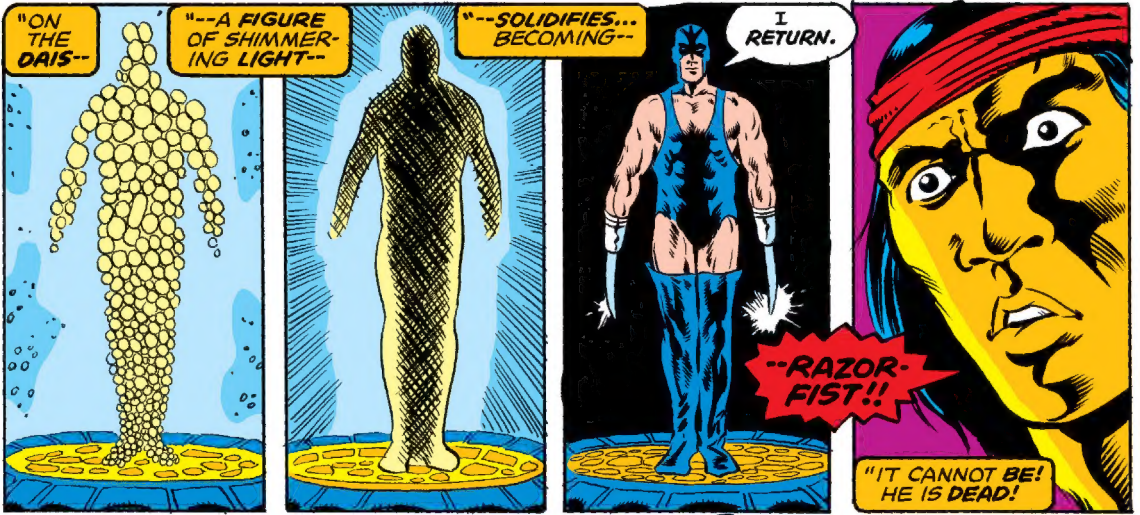
WE MUST BRING HIM BACK, THROUGH THIS REPLIC. WE MUST EMBODY THE SPIRIT OF MAN IN THE WORKS OF HANDS--FOR THIS TURNING OF A NEW TIME.

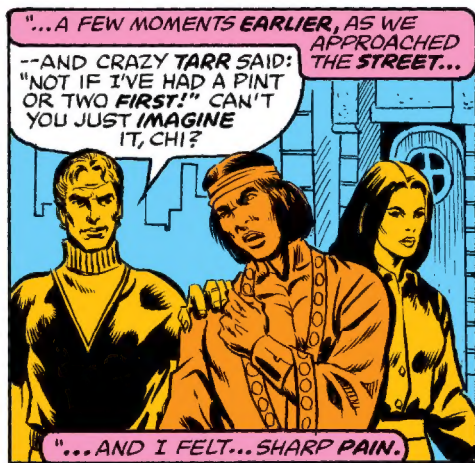
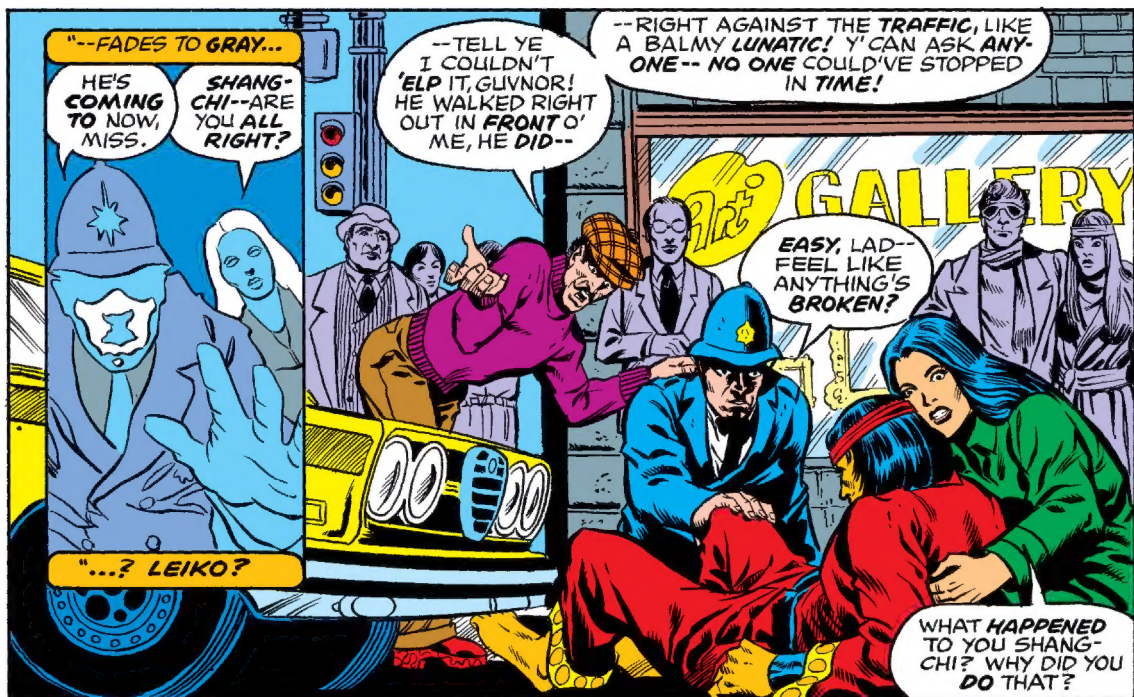
"THEN IT IS MORE THAN A PLACE OF FUTURE SCIENCE..."

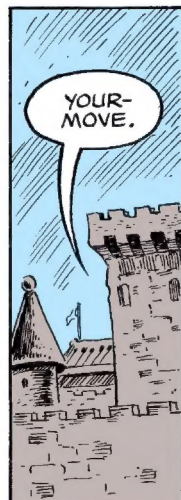
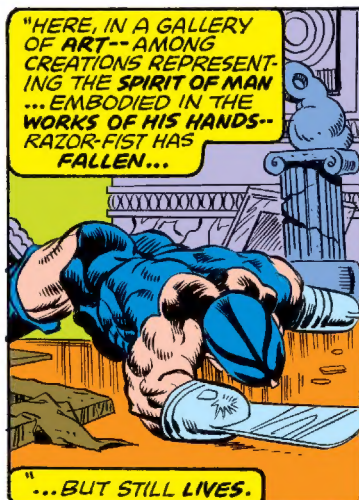
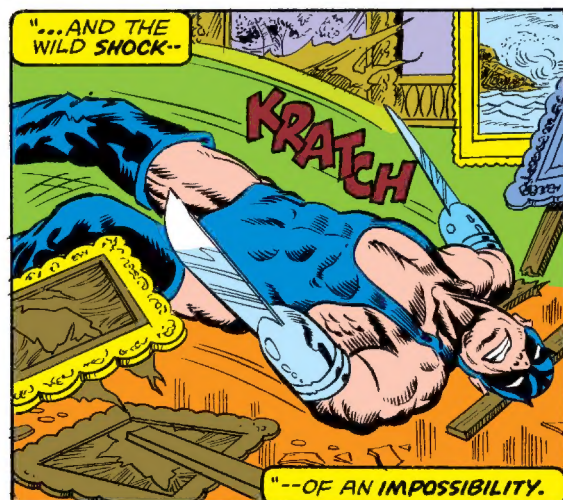
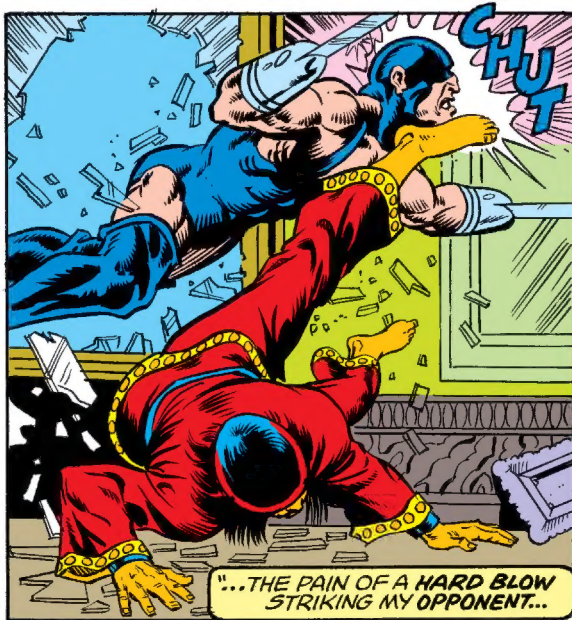


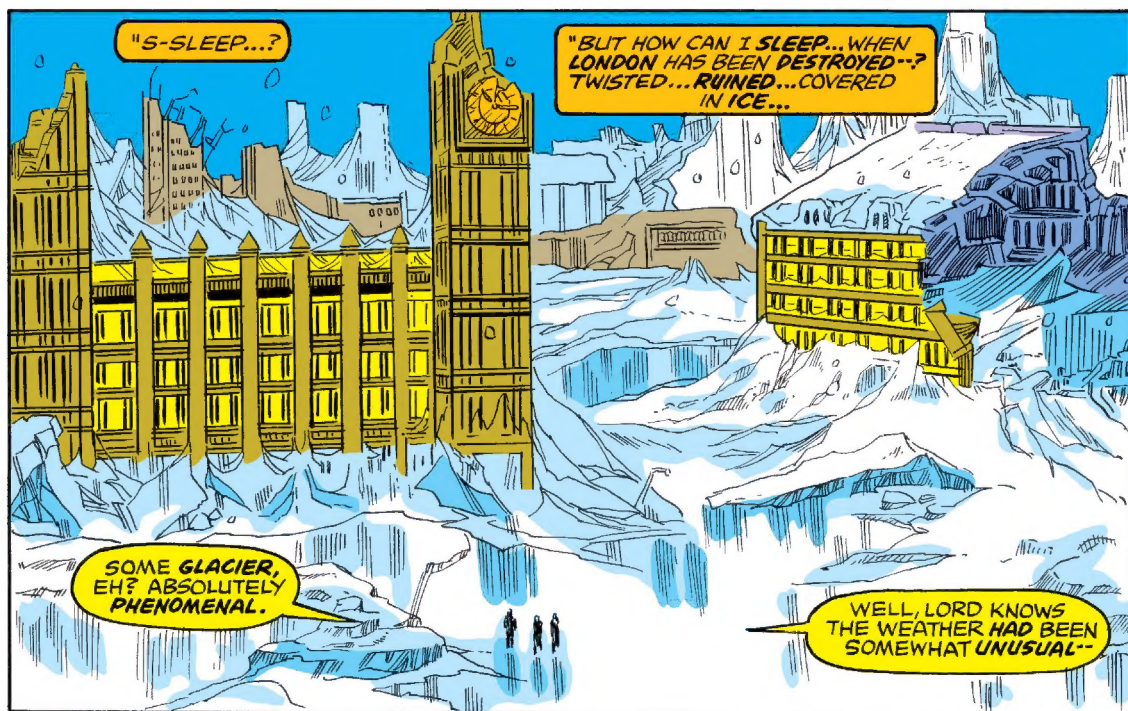
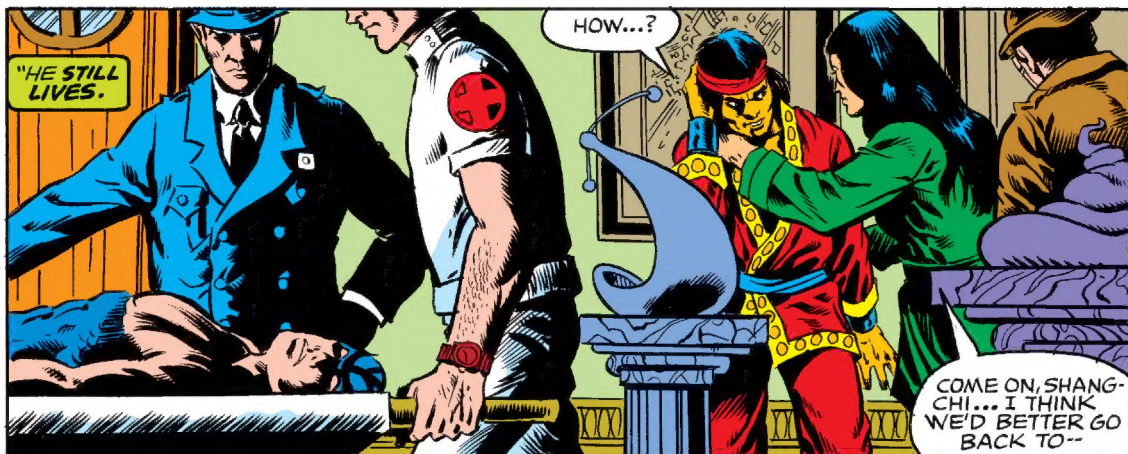
"IT IS A TEMPLE OF RELIGION, TOO, A MARRIAGE OF RATIONAL MYSTICISM..."

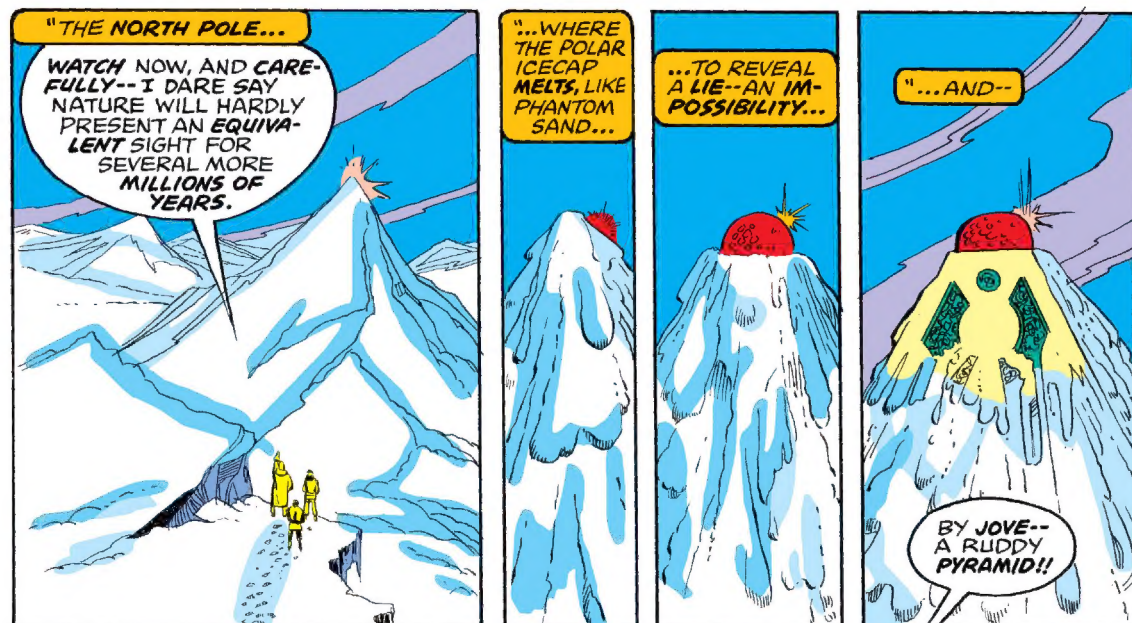
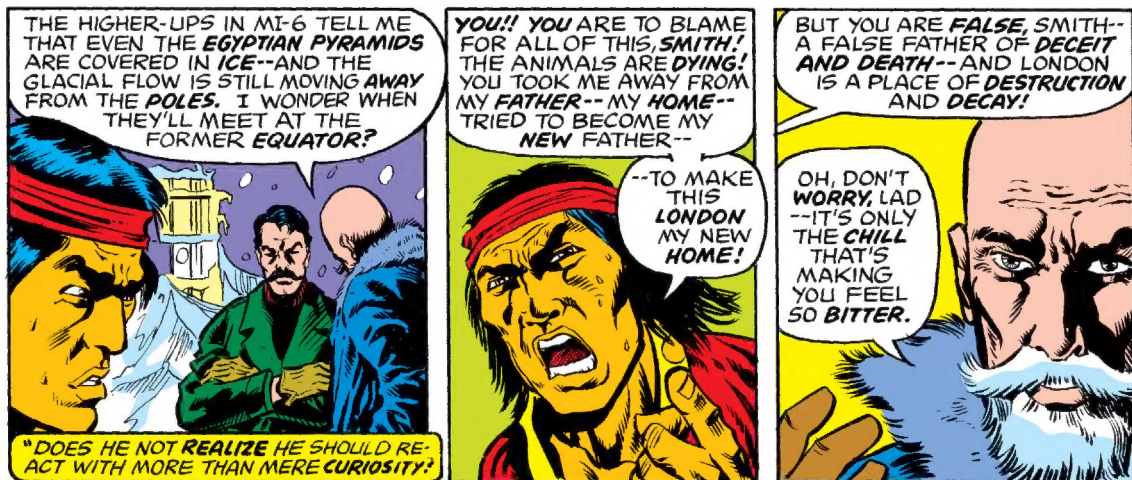
ALL IS READY. I NOW THROW THE SWITCH--THAT WE MAY WELCOME HIS RETURN.

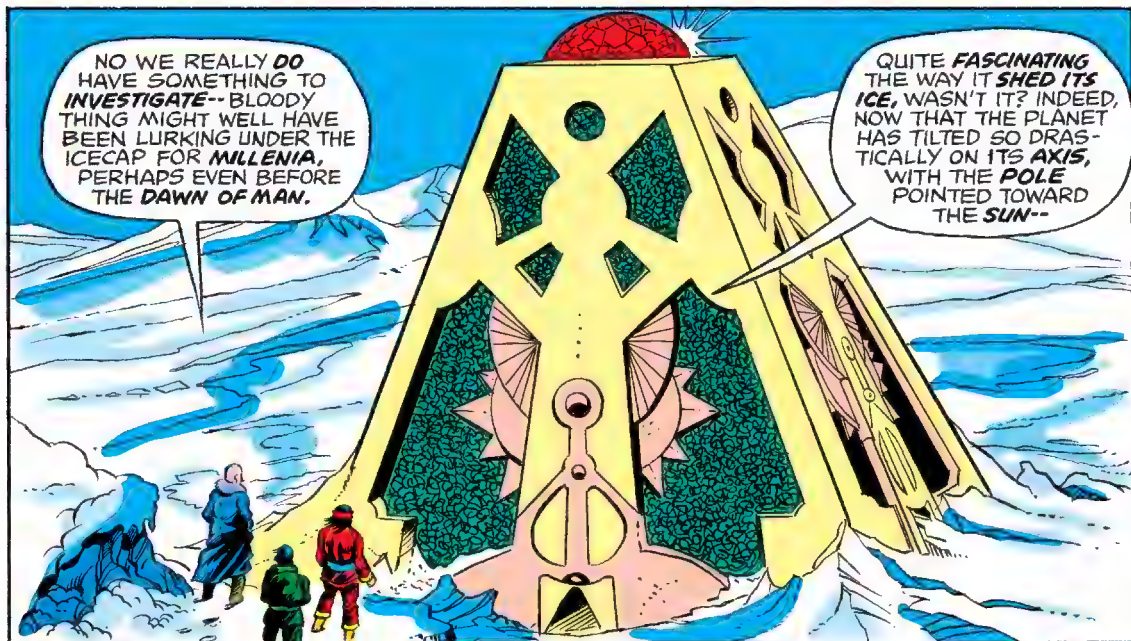












NO WE REALLY **DO** HAVE SOMETHING TO **INVESTIGATE**-- BLOODY THING MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN LURKING UNDER THE ICECAP FOR **MILLENNIA**, PERHAPS EVEN BEFORE THE **DAWN OF MAN**.

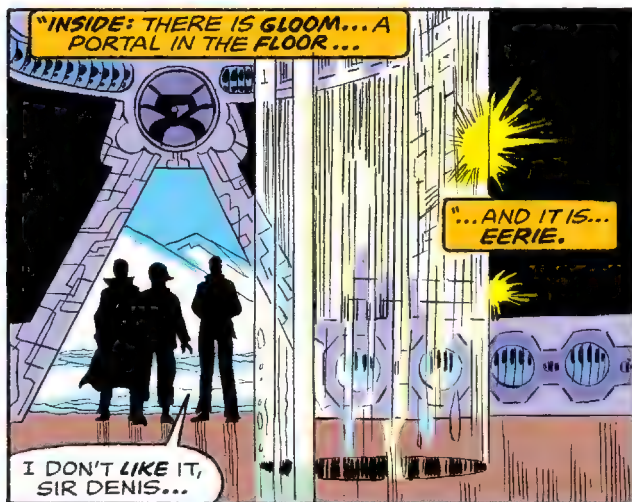
QUITE **FASCINATING** THE WAY IT **SHED ITS ICE**, WASN'T IT? INDEED, NOW THAT THE PLANET HAS TILTED SO DRAS- TICALLY ON ITS **AXIS**, WITH THE **POLE** POINTED TOWARD THE **SUN**--



--I SHOULD IMAGINE THE GLACIERS WILL START SLIDING AT AN **AMAZING** RATE.

BUT LET'S **EXPLORE**, SHALL WE?

"MY HEART HAS BEEN **POISONED**, BURNING WITH **HATRED** FOR SMITH.



"INSIDE: THERE IS **GLOOM**... A **PORTAL** IN THE **FLOOR**...

"...AND IT IS... **EERIE**.

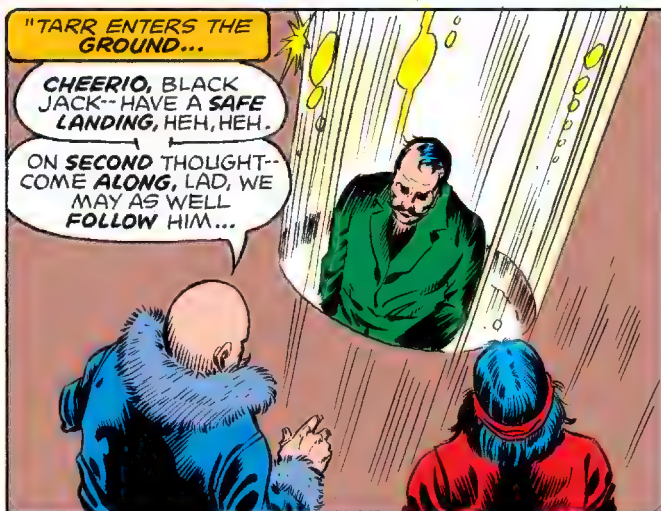
I DON'T **LIKE** IT, SIR DENIS...



THIS **GLASSITE BOOTH**, FOR INSTANCE-- IT'S **NOT GLASS**. APPARENTLY AN **ANTI-GRAVITY CHAMBER**...

MY HEAD FEELS LIKE IT'S **FLOAT- ING** IN HERE.

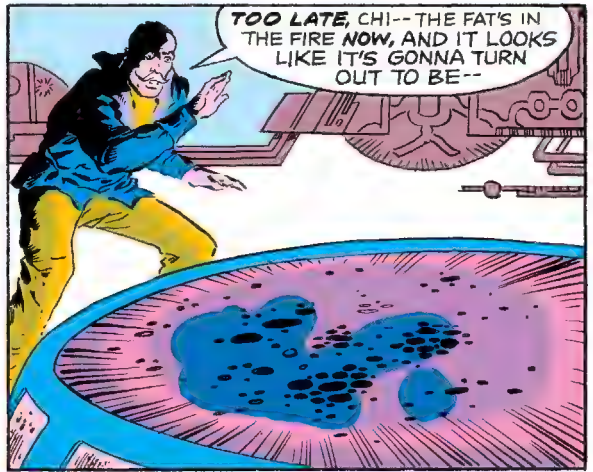
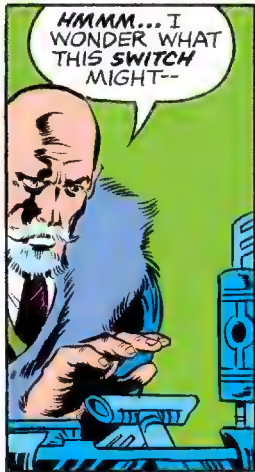
WELL, STEP **INTO** IT, **BLACK JACK**.



"TARR ENTERS THE **GROUND**...

CHEERIO, **BLACK JACK**--HAVE A **SAFE LANDING**, HEH, HEH.

ON **SECOND THOUGHT**-- COME **ALONG**, LAD, WE MAY AS WELL **FOLLOW HIM**...



"AFTER ALL, HE HAS RE-CREATED THE ADVENT..."

I RETURN. AND YOU WILL KNOW ME AGAIN AS AMAR-TU.

THE EARTH HAS BEEN RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE, FOR IF THE ICE HAD NOT MELTED, THE SWITCH WOULD STILL ELUDE THE WORK OF YOUR HAND.

THUS, I HAVE RETURNED TO MAKE BLISS OF CHAOS --TO USHER IN THE THIRD AGE OF NEW LIFE.

I AM YOUR SALVATION AND I FILL YOU WITH THE ANSWER TO ALL MISERY, ALL PAIN, ALL SUFFERING, ALL LIFE. I FILL YOU WITH--

LOVE

SMITH, I...I...

EASY, LAD-- I KNOW... I FEEL IT, TOO...

"HE IS SHEATHED IN A CLOAK OF GLITTERING LIGHT, CROWNED WITH A HALO OF FLAME..."

COME TO ME.

LET ME ENFOLD YOU IN SALVATION... IN LOVE...

"WE CANNOT RESIST."

"WE ARE HELPLESS IN THE FACE OF BLISS AND NEW HOPE..."

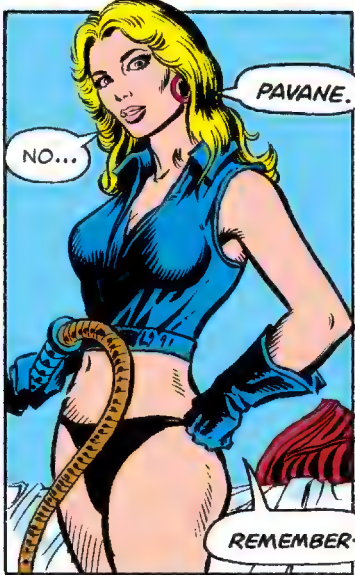
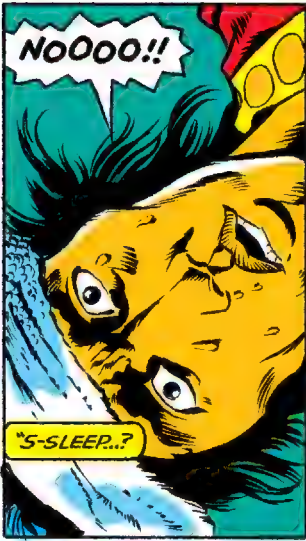
"...CHANGING..."

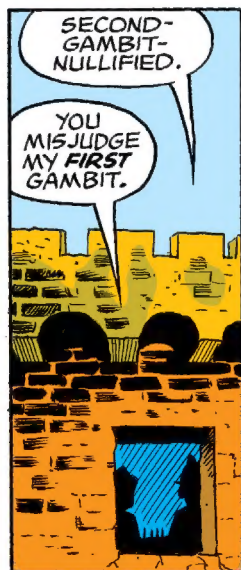
HA HA HA HA

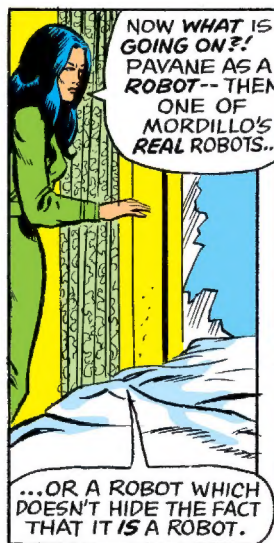
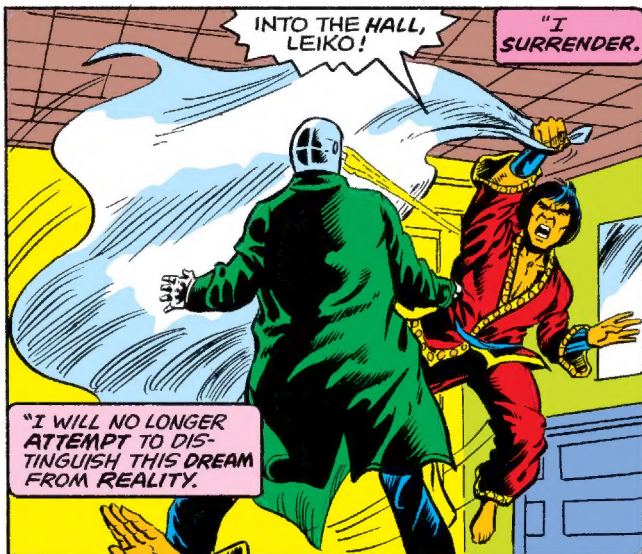
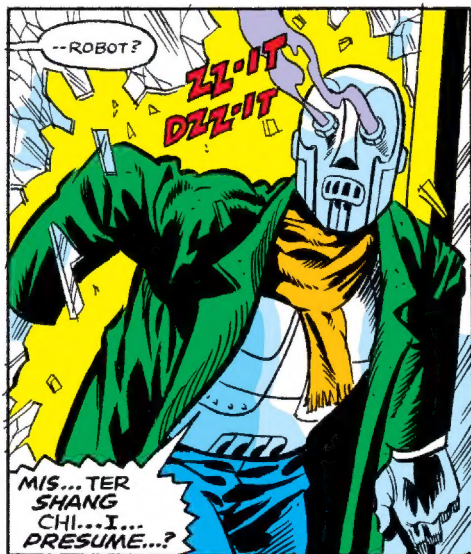
"...TO SENSELESS DEATH-- DESPAIR--!! FIRE-- BURNING!!"

HA HA HA HA

"NOOOO!!"









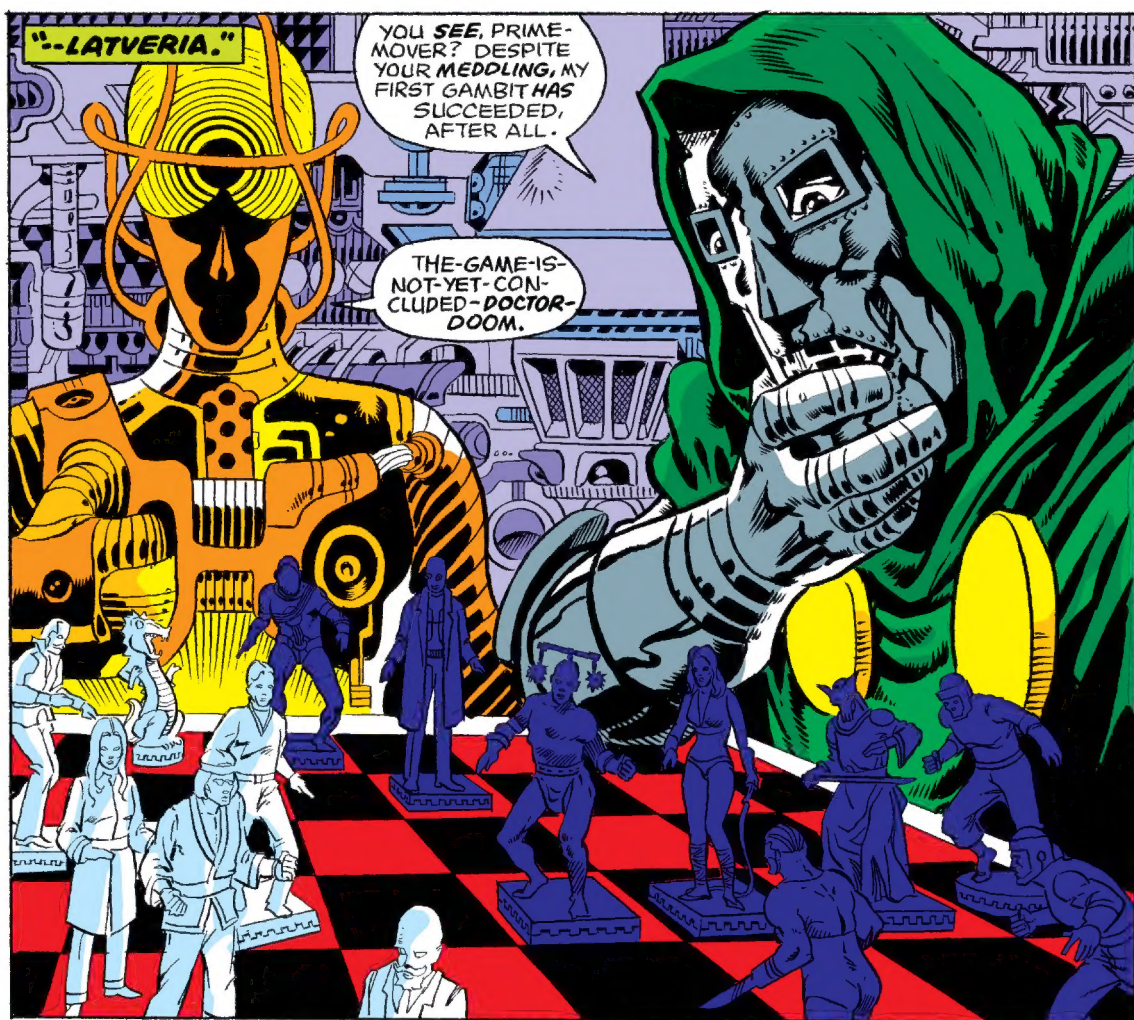
YEP-- IT'S JUST OLD CLIVE UNDER THE SUIT OF ARMOR.

"THEN... THE REAL ROBOT... WAS THE ONLY ONE OF THE THREE... WHO WAS NOT A ROBOT..."

Y'SEE, I WAS ALSO DRUGGED SOMEHOW-- MAYBE IN MY MORNING TEA...

...AND FORCED, AGAINST MY WILL, TO DRUG CHI ON THE STREETCORNER. DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I WAS DOING IT, THOUGH I REMEMBER IT WELL ENOUGH...





**NEXT
ISSUE:**

MORE THAN **MILDLY MYSTIFIED** AND **STUNNED ENOUGH** PEOPLE--? OR ARE YA CRAVING **MORE** OF THIS WEIRDNESS? WE **THOUGHT** SO, AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE CORDIALLY INVITED TO **PART TWO'S--**

**END
GAME!**